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Reserve

Factors Involved in Organizing and  
Conducting a Sustained Educational Program for 4-H  
Club Members on the State, County, and Community Levels

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In the making of plans for developing a long-time educational program for 4-H Club work to effect a substantial increase in the enrollment with the possibility of increasing the quality of the work, certain factors should be carefully considered. These factors include four important steps to follow in developing and conducting more effective club work.

Step 1 - Adequate Consideration of the Educational Aspect of 4-H Club Work.

This means to develop a broad-gaged educational program directed to present club members, prospective club members, parents, farm and civic organization, schools, churches, and the general public, in order to provide a better understanding of the values in 4-H Club work for boys and girls.

Step 2 - The Organization and Program Aspects of 4-H Club Work. This means to develop an organization and program designed to meet more adequately the interest, ability, and needs of boys and girls.

Step 3 - The Local Leadership Aspect of 4-H Club Work to Provide an Effective Program for Recruiting and Training an Adequate Number of Local 4-H Club Leaders.

Step 4 - The Evaluation Aspect of 4-H Club Work. Develop a more adequate method of evaluating the results of the 4-H Club program and its influence on boys and girls.

This paper attempts to point out some important topics under each of the four steps mentioned. These topics seem worthy of very careful consideration in analyzing problems and in discussing and formulating plans and campaigns for a longtime educational program for 4-H Club work in the different States and Territories. Obviously, some of these topics will deserve more consideration than others in different States, counties, and communities. But it seems that frequent discussion of the topics with boys and girls, and with individuals and groups responsible for 4-H Club work would aid materially in strengthening club work throughout the country.



The subdivisions under these four steps are not entirely new. Many of them have been used extensively in 4-H Club work for years. Apparently, what is needed now in order to make 4-H Club work more effective and to obtain a more complete coverage of the eligible rural boys and girls, is greater emphasis on certain fundamentals that have never had as much consideration or as sympathetic treatment as they seem to deserve.

The records show that 4-H Club work is reaching about 1 out of 8 or 12.5 percent, of the rural boys and girls 10 to 20 years of age inclusive, in any given year in the 48 States and Alaska, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, according to 1946 club data. How would it be possible for every State to reach 1 out of every 2 or 3 eligible boys and girls? Some States are now reaching 1 out of 4 or 5 rural youth, but many States are far from this achievement. How to reach more boys and girls is a problem that is of deep concern and, of course, a challenge to the Federal, the State, and the county extension personnel.

It is extremely doubtful if 4-H Club work, in many States, will be able to enlarge its enrollment to any great extent unless greater attention is given to discussions on the topics under each of these four categories to strengthen the entire 4-H Club organization and program.

#### I. The Educational Aspect of 4-H Club Work:

1. Agents should see that local leaders, parents, and club members, and the general public, acquire a clear understanding of the aims and purposes of 4-H Club work, such as:

##### a. Objectives.

The distinctive educational objectives in 4-H Club work are:

HEAD-- To instill in the minds of rural young people an intelligent understanding and appreciation of nature and the environment in which they live.

To teach young people the value of research and to develop in them a scientific attitude toward the problems of the farm and the home.

HEART-- To train rural young people in cooperative action to the end that they may increase their accomplishments and through associated efforts better assist in solving rural problems.

To help rural young people to develop desirable ideals and standards for farming, homemaking, community life, and citizenship, and a sense of responsibility for their attainment.

HANDS-- To afford rural young people technical instruction in farming and homemaking, that they may acquire skill and understanding in these fields and a clearer vision of agriculture as a basic industry, and of homemaking as a worthy occupation.

To provide rural young people an opportunity to "learn by doing" through conducting certain farm or home enterprises and demonstrating to others what they have learned.



HEALTH--- To develop in rural young people habits of healthful living, to provide them with information and direction in the intelligent use of leisure, and to arouse in them worthy ambitions and a desire to continue to learn, that they may live fuller and richer lives.

b. Ten 4-H Guideposts.

These guideposts are used by cooperative extension workers and local leaders to aid 4-H members in analyzing their own situations, needs, and interests so that they may build programs that will help to prepare them for citizenship, physically, mentally, and spiritually by--

- (1) Developing talents for greater usefulness.  
Opportunity to develop talents is a privilege accorded to youth in a democratic society. Developing talents is acquiring educational growth. Talents can be developed under proper learning situations. Interest is the basis of all learning, and learning is an active process. Through project work, judging, presiding at meetings, demonstrations before groups, keeping records, and writing reports, 4-H Club members learn to do by doing. By these and other means they develop their talents and thus increase their knowledge.
- (2) Joining with friends for work, fun, and fellowship.  
In joining 4-H Clubs, boys and girls agree to do a worth-while piece of farm or home work. Normal boys and girls desire to join with their friends for work, fun, and fellowship. Every person should know how to work efficiently and skillfully. Work can be made a pleasure rather than a task, if it is a challenge. 4-H Club work offers many opportunities to learn how to enjoy work and to have fun and fellowship, all of which are valuable assets in achieving success and happiness throughout life.
- (3) Learning to live in a changing world.  
Many changes have come about in the world during the past few years. The airplane and other rapid means of travel have helped to shorten distances so that peoples of different countries have become neighbors. We are living in a world that is changing. Mechanical power in industry and on the farm has helped to produce these changes. The youth of our country will live their lives in this changing world. They need to prepare themselves to live in such a world.
- (4) Choosing a way to earn a living.  
Choosing a way to earn a living is one of the major problems that confront most boys and girls. Many 4-H Club members will choose farming or farm homemaking as a way of life. Others will go to urban centers to spend their lives in some business or profession. Decisions will have to be made in one way or the other of these directions, and preparation must be made for the line of work to be selected. 4-H Club work has much to offer in preparing boys and girls for a career in life.



- (5) Producing food and fiber for home and market.  
One of the main objectives in the 4-H Club program is to teach effective production of food and fiber. It is important that every club member learn the value of food production. 4-H Club members are being asked to do their full part in producing food and fiber to help feed and clothe a hungry world. They are responding to this appeal in a very worthy manner. Efficient production of farm products has many educational values for Club members.
- (6) Creating better homes for better living.  
4-H Club work has a vital part in helping to create and maintain good homes. To have been reared in an attractive and comfortable home is an asset of enduring value to boys and girls. Too many farm homes are unattractive and are lacking in modern conveniences. It is important that farm boys and girls, early in life, learn ways and means of helping to make their homes attractive, convenient, and comfortable.
- (7) Conserving nature's resources for security and happiness.  
Adequate conservation of our natural resources is a responsibility of a people. Conservation of nature's resources has been sadly neglected over the years, mainly because of a lack of understanding and appreciation of the enduring values in conservation. 4-H Club work emphasizes the importance of conserving soil, water, and forests and the boys and girls learn the value of conservation by actually carrying out improved practices along these lines in their own farm homes.
- (8) Building Health for a Strong America.  
One of the four principles of the 4-H Club Pledge is "My Health for Better Living." Most 4-H Club members learn some principles of health and develop better health habits through club work. The improvement of health is one of the prime objectives of 4-H Club work. There is a definite need for more positive action in regard to the health of the Nation. To build a healthy Nation, the youth of our country need to learn to develop habits of healthful living.
- (9) Every community has needs that are vital to the welfare of the group. These are physical needs such as property, social needs such as churches and clubs, intellectual needs such as schools and other cultural enterprises. The 4-H Club Pledge emphasizes participation in whatever the community needs. In 4-H Club work boys and girls learn to cooperate and work together for their own and for the welfare of the community.
- (10) Serving as Citizen in Maintaining World Peace.  
Efforts now being made to establish world peace should be of vital concern to all youth as well as to adults. Youth will live most of their lives in an era when peace in the world means more than ever, because of the development of atomic energy. Boys and girls need to understand what world organization means in helping to maintain world peace. They must understand what democracy means at home and abroad by living the democratic way of life and by taking an active part in organized society.



c. Another description of the educational objectives of 4-H Club work proposed a few years ago by Dr. E. N. Ferriss, professor of rural education, Cornell University, provides a good standard for rating the various 4-H activities of boys and girls. These objectives are worthy of careful study and use in conducting 4-H Club work. They are stated as follows:

- (1) Health Objectives-- To promote the acquirement of knowledge and desirable habits of proper foods, clothing, exercise, and care of the body, and attitudes favorable to good health.
- (2) Economic Objectives-- To promote the development of a more efficient producer and a more efficient consumer. To become an efficient producer is to acquire the knowledge and skills of farming or other occupations and desirable habits of trying out and using the better practices in farming and homemaking. To become an efficient consumer is to acquire knowledge of proper values of goods to be consumed, as well as desirable habits and high standards in relations to dress, food, reading, music, home furnishing, art, and so on.
- (3) Exploratory Objective-- To promote the acquirement of knowledge of the significance of various vocations to society, the advantages and disadvantages of different vocations, and to afford an opportunity to explore farming and other vocations, through observation or experience.
- (4) Civic Objective-- To promote the acquirement of knowledge of the important social institutions and their place in the social order and the development of desirable habits of participating in their own organizations for their own satisfaction and the general welfare of all.
- (5) Sociability Objective-- To promote the acquirement of knowledge of the opportunities for sociability at home and in social groups and desirable habits of participating in the social life of the family and community groups.
- (6) Recreational Objective-- To promote the acquirement of proper tastes and standards for the enjoyment and the use of leisure and develop self-sustaining habits of individual and group amusement along desirable lines.
- (7) Esthetic Objective-- To promote the development of proper tastes and standard for the enjoyment of the beautiful and develop desirable habits of promoting these things which add to the beauty of home and community.
- (8) Ethical Objective-- To promote the acquirement of desirable ideals and habits of conduct, industry, and cooperation, to develop the proper respect for the rights and interests of others, attain the proper attitudes of responsibility and participation in the religious life of the family and community.



2. It is most important that first-year members, at the beginning, have some idea of what they can learn in club work through producing and conserving food; practicing good health habits; simple cooking and serving of food; home improvement; recreation, games, and plays, attending camps; and learning how to preside at meetings.
3. The new club member should understand that club work is not compulsory, but voluntary, and that it includes many boys and girls in all States.
4. For beginner club members, projects should be very simple and relatively easy to do. Older and more experienced club members should have larger and more challenging projects.
5. Help boys and girls to select projects in line with their interest, ability, and needs.
6. 4-H Club activities must be directed to the educational growth of boys and girls in such a way that they will understand values of what they are learning.
7. Parents of 4-H Club members should see more demonstrations by their children. Arrange for as many club members as possible to put on a demonstration during the year. Such activities stimulate the interest of both boys and girls and their parents in club work. Effective club work always has the cooperation of parents.
8. Every club member should learn at the beginning the 4-H Club pledge, the club motto, and the club emblem and colors.
9. Agents should have frequent discussions with local leaders, club officers, and other older club members on the principles of the Ten Guideposts and show how these principles should be used in developing and conducting the 4-H Club programs.
10. The mortality of the club membership at the end of the first year is too large. An average of about 39 percent of the first-year members fail to reenroll. The percentage is larger in some States. Unless first-year club members have their interest stimulated and sustained, they will not reenroll. More attention should be given to this age group.
11. Agents and local leaders should make club work so interesting that members will want to reenroll the second year.
12. Boys and girls who become club members at an early age usually remain in the work longest. They should be enrolled as soon as possible after 10 years of age.
13. Beginner club members and their local leaders should be repeatedly told that a boy or a girl cannot learn very much in club work in 1 year. The importance of club membership for 2, 3, or 4 years and longer should be emphasized.



14. In order to keep the public well informed and to sustain interest, 4-H Club work should have a great deal of publicity at local, county, and State levels. Every 4-H Club should observe all 4-H events, such as achievement days, 4-H Club week, rural life Sunday, and rallies, and provide ample publicity.
15. Club boys and girls should help to plan fairs and exhibits, and attend camps, short courses, picnics, and recreational activities at appropriate times. These events are a means of keeping the public well informed about 4-H Club work and to keep up the interest of club members.
16. More effort should be made to inform older farm boys and girls about the values of 4-H Club work in developing leadership and in vocational guidance, and the opportunities it offers to develop a farm enterprise and to establish a farm business.
17. More effort should be made to disseminate information about 4-H Club programs and activities among such agencies as county superintendents of schools, rural school teachers, members of farm organizations, business clubs such as Rotary, Kiwanis and junior chambers of commerce, professional women's clubs, and the like. To accomplish this, a continuous and sustained educational campaign in 4-H Club work is definitely needed in all counties of each State. State 4-H Club leaders, district agents, and other members of the State extension staff have a large responsibility in such campaigns.
18. More should be done with older boys and girls to encourage a father-son and a mother-daughter partnership as an outgrowth of 4-H Club experiences.
19. It is important for agents, local leaders, and parents to understand that fundamental principles of education have a direct application to 4-H Club work as well as to other fields of learning. One of these principles is that active experience is essential to learning. 4-H project activities provide excellent bases for getting experiences. Another principle is that improvement in present living is the best and only way in which we can test whether or not a boy or girl is learning. When a club member makes an improvement in doing something, this is fair proof that learning has resulted.

## II. The Organization and Program Aspects of 4-H Club Work

1. Collect factual data through a survey of each county to determine the number of rural boys and girls 10 to 20, inclusive, who are eligible for 4-H Club membership. Calculate the percentage of this group enrolled in club work.
2. Solicit the interest and cooperation of communities and schools in 4-H Club work.
3. Form the acquaintance of county superintendents of schools, school principals, and other teachers. Cultivate the friendship of these school people and enlist their interest in 4-H Club work.
4. Learn who are the influential people of each community who might be willing to serve as local leaders, or could influence others to become local leaders.



5. Organize a 4-H Club in each community. Let boys and girls have a part in selecting local leaders.
6. Before 4-H officers are elected, agents or local leaders should explain the duties of officers and their importance to the success of the club.
7. Give needed guidance to boys and girls in selecting club officers for the year. Elect a full set of officers for each club.
8. Organize a county council or some similar organization for 4-H Club work composed of club officers. Hold meetings of the council at stated times during the year to discuss 4-H Club procedures.
9. Organize a county local leaders' association. Arrange for these leaders to hold three or four meetings, at regular intervals, during the year to discuss their problems, agents meeting with leaders.
10. Develop a 4-H Club program for the year with local leaders and club members helping in program development. Present program to council.
11. Plan many interesting 4-H Club activities for the year in cooperation with club members and their local leaders. Develop a monthly calendar of activities.
12. Develop plans and observe all national 4-H Club events
13. Have sponsoring community committees in the interest of 4-H Club work.
14. Have each year at least one regular monthly meeting of each local 4-H Club
15. Junior leaders selected from among older club members and other young people can be used effectively in developing and carrying out the club program.
16. Every 4-H Club member should select a project that will be a worthwhile piece of farm or home work.
17. Agents or local leaders should give the instructions boys and girls need in carrying out their projects.
18. Larger 4-H Clubs should be divided into junior and senior age divisions.
19. In some areas many community 4-H Clubs are broken up because of consolidation of schools and transportation of pupils. In such areas the community club should be kept intact and made a unit of the larger club at the consolidated school. The small clubs should have a local lay leader and regular officers with a definite meeting place or places. Meetings at homes of members have many advantages.
20. Keep up club interest during summer months by having local farm men and women or junior leaders take active parts in leading the clubs. Where a teacher is the local leader, plans should be made for an assistant leader to carry on during the summer months.
21. Organize young farmers' and homemakers' clubs or some similar organization from the 21- to 30-year group or possibly those immediately below 21 years of age. Some members of this group will make excellent local 4-H Club leaders.



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22. Close coordination should be maintained among State 4-H Club leaders, district agents, and subject-matter specialists in developing and conducting club programs. Periodic conferences of these workers with the director of extension and his assistant in the interest of 4-H Club work are essential.
23. In counties having assistant agents and no club agent, the assistant agent should give the major part of their time to 4-H Club work. The approximate amount of time should be agreed to by the extension director, district agents, State 4-H Club leaders, and local agents in the county and the local sponsoring committee.
24. Make provision for an adequate amount of recreation in each club program for the year.
25. Some State 4-H Club staffs should be enlarged in order that club work will be served adequately.

### III. The Local Leadership Aspect of 4-H Club Work

1. Agents, parents, and club members should cooperate in selecting local 4-H Club leaders.
2. Local leaders should come from those best qualified and most influential in the community, but they must have a deep and sustained interest in helping boys and girls.
3. Agents should see that local leaders understand what will be expected of them in the club program.
4. Local leaders need also to know what 4-H Club work is and what it expects to accomplish. They should have a good knowledge of the main objectives of 4-H Club work and the goals established for the year.
5. Junior leaders chosen from among older 4-H Club members should be used as a definite part of the local leadership personnel.
6. County agents should call local leaders together three or four times a year to discuss problems that local leaders face. Agents should ascertain from local leaders what their problems are and hold discussions on these problems.
7. Adequate recognition of local leaders for the meritorious work they do is important. Special events for local leaders should be provided. Different clover awards should be granted. Publicity of local leaders' work in local papers will help to keep up interest.



8. Agents should encourage local leaders to take the lead in conducting the club meeting. Sometimes agents do too much of the work local leaders should do.
9. One of the best ways to develop leadership ability is for the leader to assume responsibility.
10. Agents should develop in local leaders a deep consciousness that the work they are doing is most essential to the success of 4-H Club work.
11. Frequent use should be made of good illustrative materials, such as slides, motion pictures, charts, and posters, that show 4-H Club events and project work. All are helpful in keeping up the spirit and interest in 4-H Club work.
12. A successful local leader should possess certain characteristics. Some of these are: A desire to work with young people; a sustained interest in rural life; faith in the importance of the work; knowledge of how to get along with young people; a high degree of sympathy for the group; enthusiasm and a sense of humor; sincerity, honesty, and capability; patience; vision of what is to be done; ability to organize and direct; tact in meeting different situations; courage; perseverance; initiative; intelligence; and many other qualities that inspire and draw young people to them.
13. Not every leader will possess all the qualities just mentioned but leadership can be developed along many of these lines if adequate guidance is given.
14. Local 4-H Club leaders need to have close and frequent contacts and guidance from county and home demonstration agents and their assistants.
15. Some local leaders from every county should be encouraged to attend State 4-H Club camps and short courses. Some special training should be provided to local leaders while they are at such meetings.
16. Frequent meetings of local leaders on the county level, where opportunity is given for discussions of their problems with local agents, are essential to successful local leadership work.
17. Trips should be planned for outstanding local leaders to State 4-H Club camps and the agricultural colleges.

#### IV. The Evaluation Aspect of 4-H Club Work

Some ways of measuring the effectiveness of 4-H Club work are:

1. An increase in the club enrollment from year to year.
2. Increase from year to year in the percentage of completions.
3. Increase in the percentage of first-year club members that reenroll for the second year.
4. Increase in the average number of years club members remain in the work.



5. Increase in the number of club members per extension agent.
6. Increase in the percentage of the eligible boys and girls enrolled in club work.
7. Increase in the number of 4-H Clubs in the county
8. Increase in the number of judging and demonstration teams
9. Increase in the number and quality of work of local leaders
10. Increase in the number of local leader training meetings
11. Increase in the number of local leaders attending local leader training meetings
12. Increase in the number of events in which 4-H Clubs participate such as county, State, and national activities
13. Increase in the number of boys and girls who do outstanding club work and win recognition at county, State and national events
14. Increase in the interest of all people of the community, the county, and the State in 4-H Club movement.
15. Increase in the amount of publicity that is given to 4-H Club work on the county and State levels.
16. Increase in the number of upper teen-age boys and girls who are keeping up their interest in 4-H Club work.
17. Increase in the number of older 4-H Club boys and girls who are serving as local leaders or assistant leaders
18. Increase in the number of boys and girls who are making profits from their projects
19. Increase in the number of boys and girls who are developing a farm or a home enterprise or a business as the result of 4-H Club training and experience.
20. Increase in the quantity of exhibits at county fairs
21. The degree to which 4-H Club work is developing, from year to year, boys and girls to become leaders in the affairs of their communities.
22. The extent to which 4-H Club experience has had a sustained influence on boys and girls in stimulating them to continue their educational training.



